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Central
Library
Study

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS
JUN 1961
HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

HAMILTON CENTRAL LIBRARY STUDY
PRELIMINARY REPORT ON SITE SELECTION

prepared for the

Hamilton Public Library Board

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Architects

21 January 1974

Introduction

The situation and opportunity in Hamilton is unusual if not unique, where major re-development of the central core of the city is taking place at the same time as the rebuilding of the Central Library is proposed.

The obvious opportunity is to be able to place the library in the best possible location from the public's point of view, and to be able to relate it functionally and esthetically to other important civic and commercial facilities.

In assessing the many possible sites a number of criteria have been taken into account and are described in this report.

There are facts about the Central Library which should be considered in assessing its relative importance to the people of the city and which should influence its location:

At least one third of the population of the city (100,000 people) are members and use the library making it probably the most used of all the public institutions. With new facilities this percentage could reach 50%.

With a new building it is expected that 3,000 to 4,000 people will make use of the Central Library each day.

Recent history indicates expanding use of library facilities by increasing percentage of the population.

Although those who are accustomed to using the library's services will find it whatever its location, it is essential that the new Central Library should be centrally located, in order that every citizen may have an opportunity to benefit from its services. If located on the proper site, the Central Library will be able to achieve its full potential to enrich the life of Hamilton.

It is a matter of civic pride that the City should construct its new Central Library as a building designed and constructed for the purpose, rather than in rented accommodation. The specialized requirements of a library operation are not compatible with rented space, even if that space has been constructed to the requirements of the library. The interests of the owner-developer are not the same as those of the library, and, in case of conflict, will inevitably take precedence over the interests of the library. The total cost for rented accommodation will be far in excess of the cost of debenture financing of the construction of a new Library by the City.

Site Selection

In order to assess possible sites for the Central Library, certain basic assumptions must be made. The development of a program for the new Central Library building, which is being carried on concurrently with the Site Selection Study, will accurately establish the floor area and spatial arrangement of the new building. For the purposes of site examination, sufficiently accurate preliminary assumptions can be made, using formulas and criteria established by various library authorities.

- Population - 300,000 (400,000 by 1984)
- Circulation - 3,000,000 per annum
- Collection - 300,000 volumes (525,000 by 1984)
- Seating - 600

1. V.S.C. Formula

$$\frac{525 \text{ volume}}{10} + 600 \times 40 + \frac{3,000,000}{40} = 151,500 \text{ sq. ft.}$$

2. M.T.P.L. Report

155,220 sq. ft.

3. A.L.A. Recommendations

Collection - 1 3/4 volume per capita = 525,000 volume

Size of Main Library - 5 sq. ft. per capita = 150,000 sq. ft.

In assessing the sites we should be considering a building of at least 150,000 sq. ft. which may need expansion within 10 years.

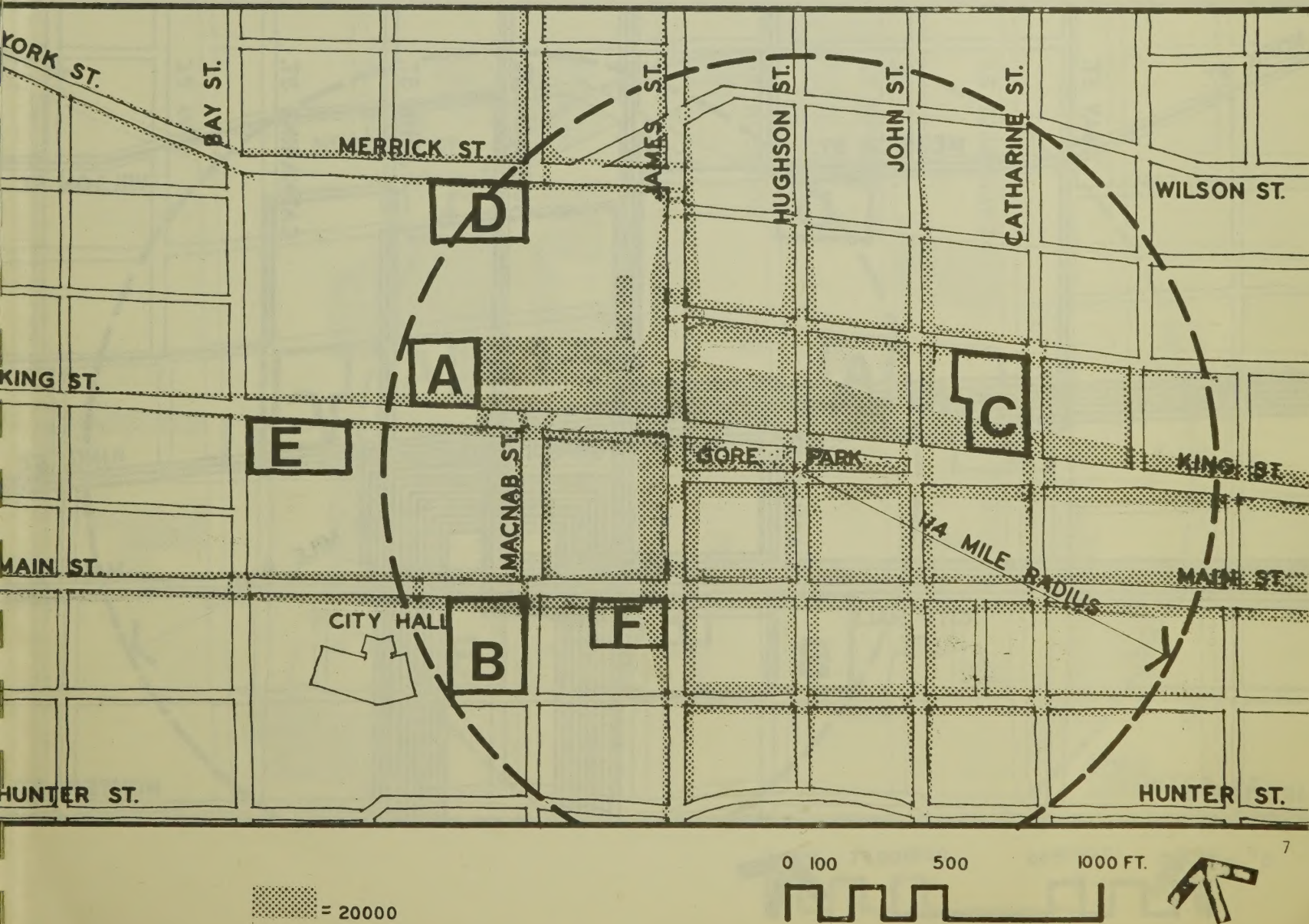
The site should be large enough to accommodate a building with a ground floor of at least 35,000 sq. ft., or should have other characteristics which can accommodate the functional requirements of the Central Library. To achieve maximum accessibility, the site should be located in the Central Business District.

In the Central Business District, pedestrian movement has priority over public transport, which in turn has priority over automobile traffic. Since the completion of the Cannon-Wilson pair of one way streets by-passing the downtown core, the volume of vehicular traffic on King and Main Streets has increased only slightly, and is expected to stabilize at a figure not much greater than the present level. It is expected that 40,000 new jobs will be created in the Central Business District within the next 25 years, and that in the same period the volume of public transit passengers entering the area will double from the present level.

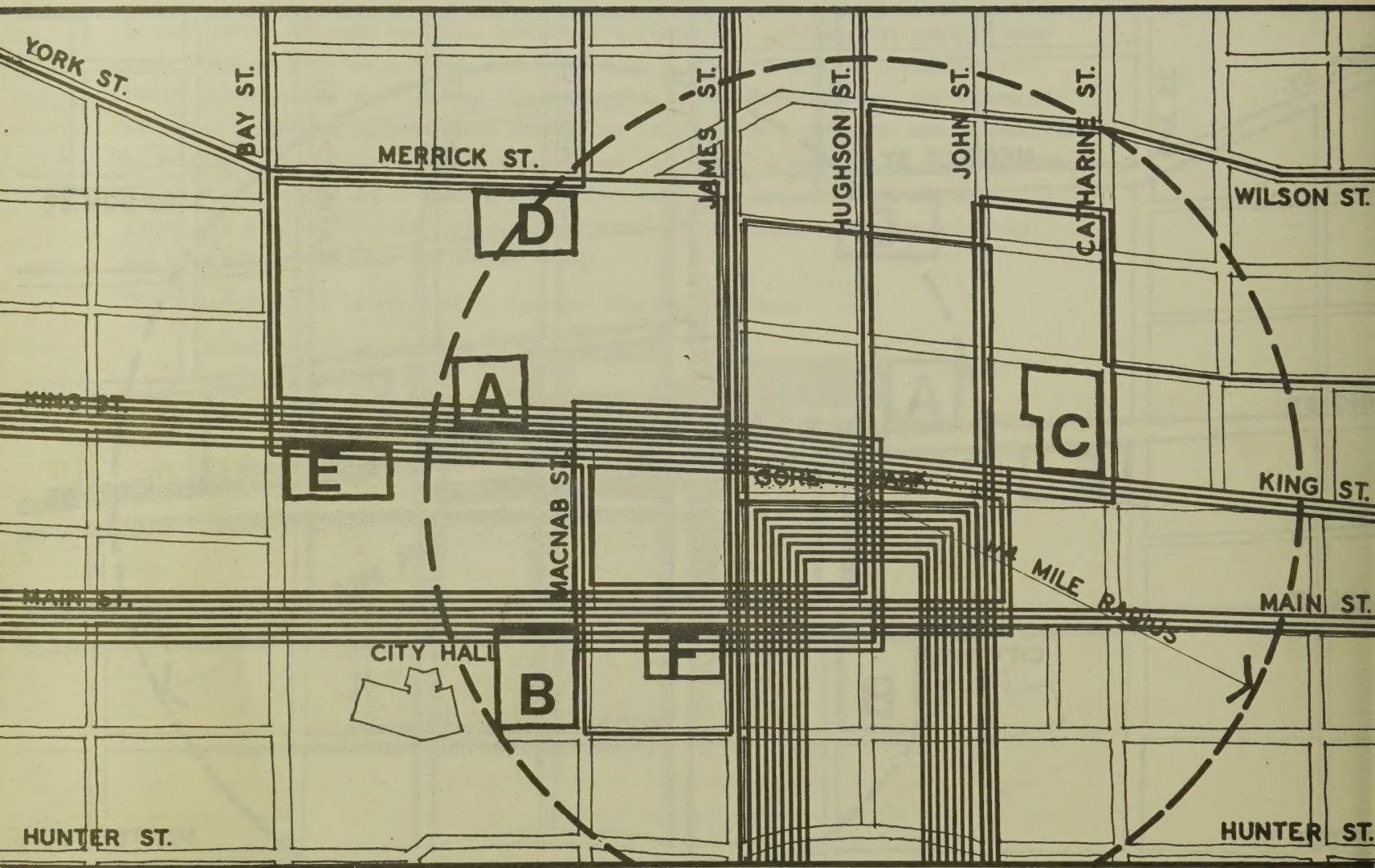
The following plans of the Central Business District indicate:

- Pedestrian Density over a 24 hour period
- Public Transit Routes
- Existing and Proposed Parking Lots

DAILY PEDESTRIAN FLOW



BUS ROUTES

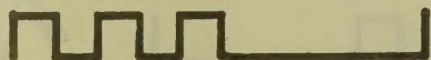


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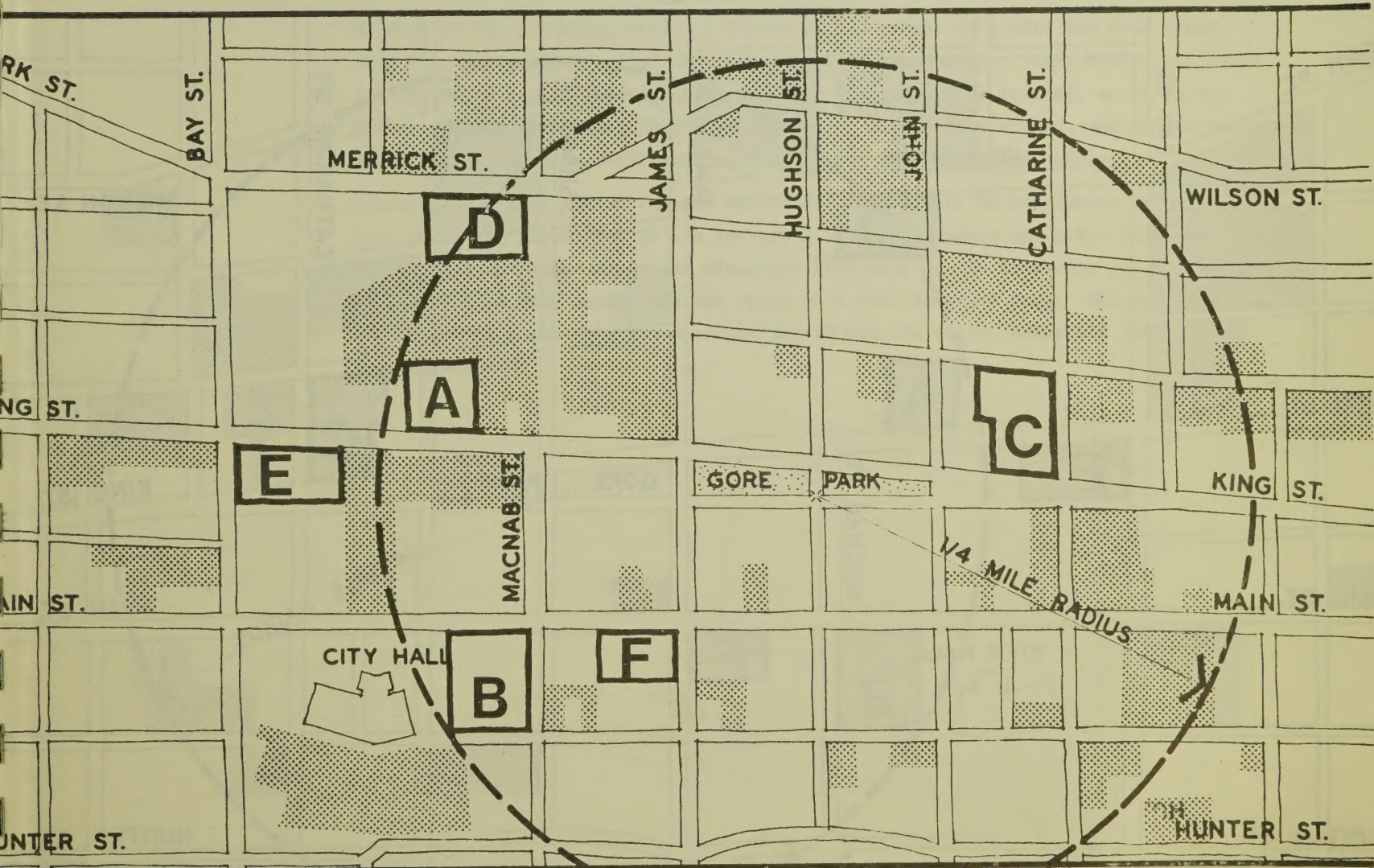
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500

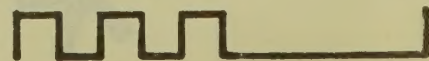
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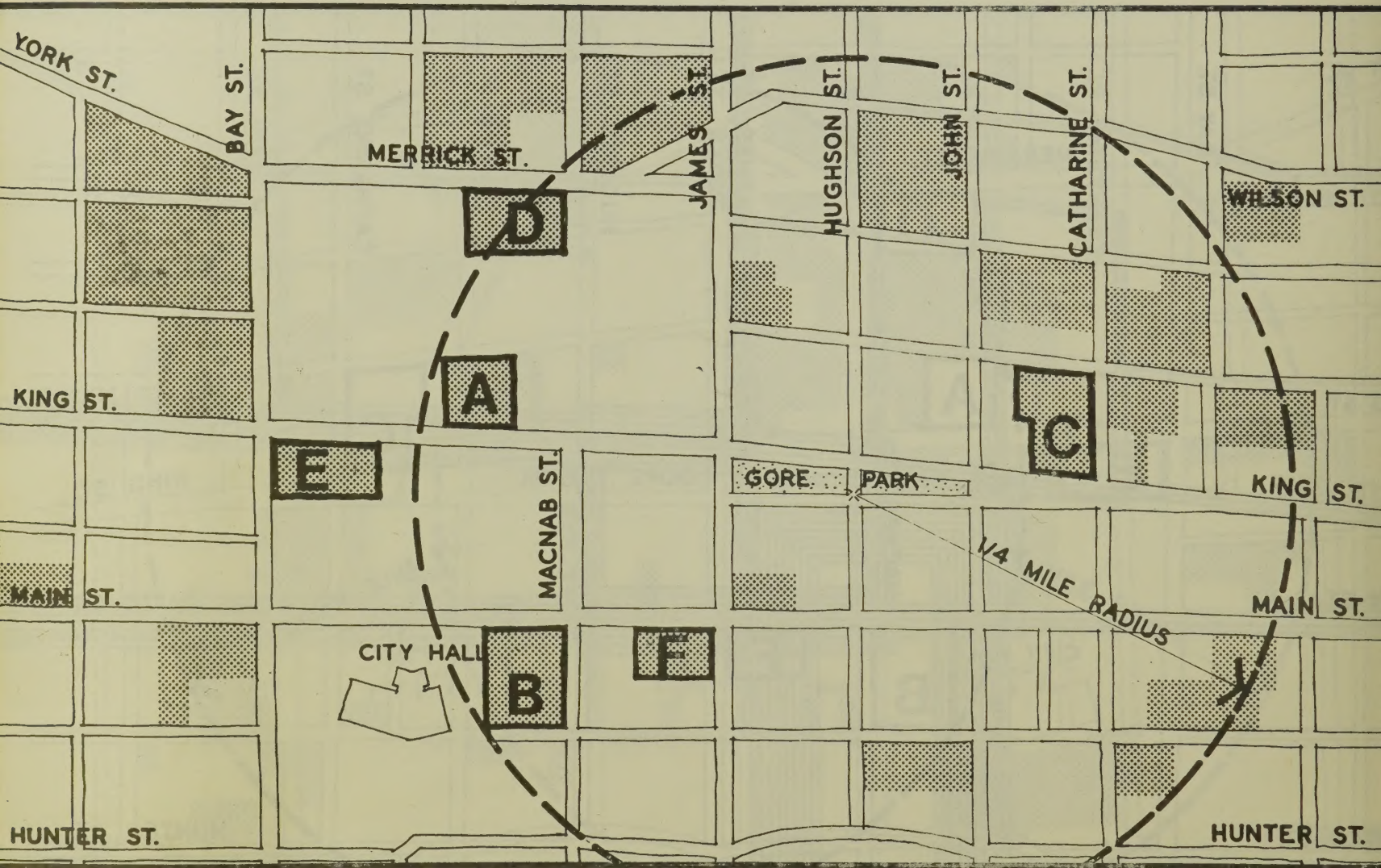
PARKING



0 100 500 1000 FT.



AVAILABLE SITES



10 0 100 500 1000 FT

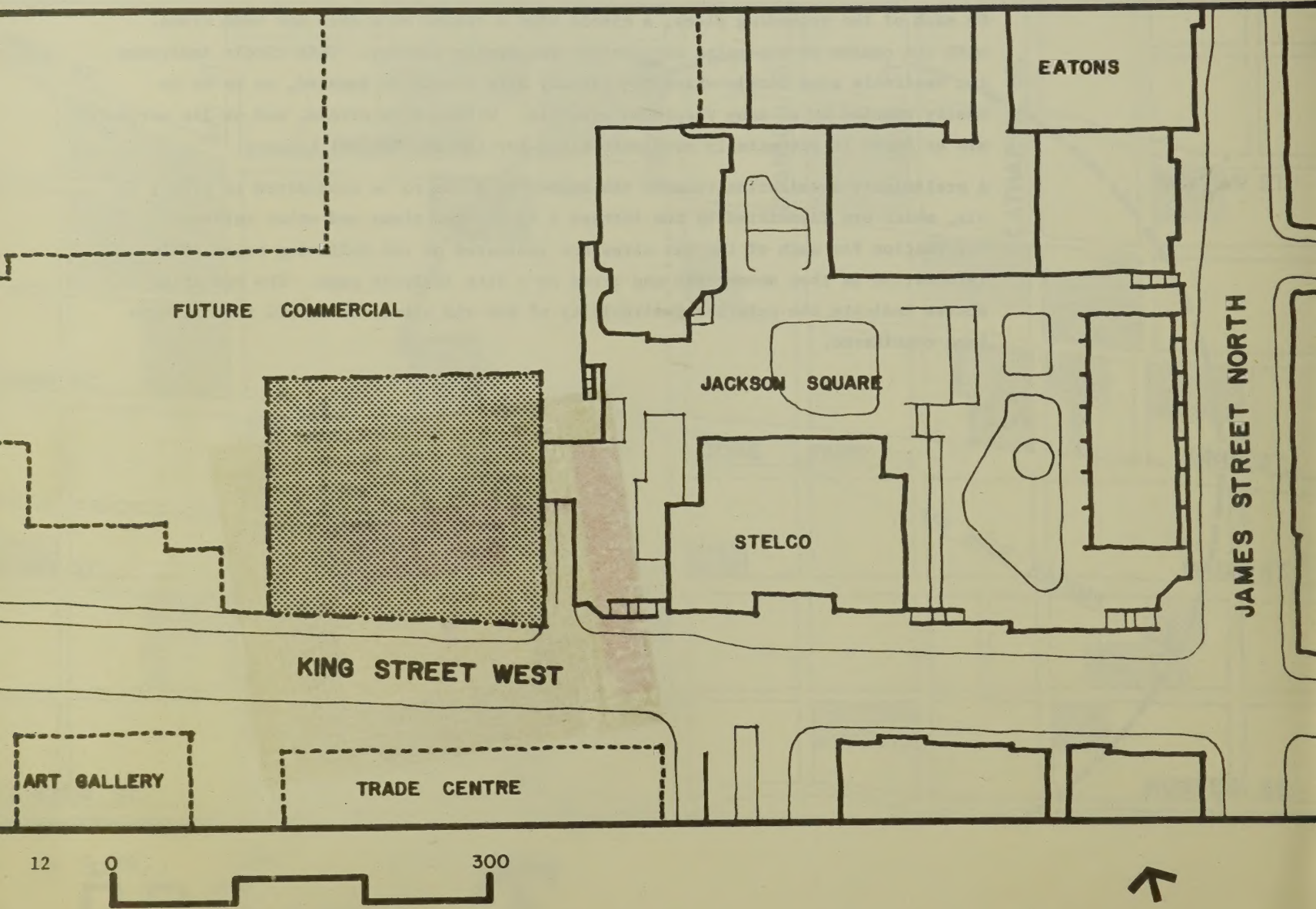


On each of the preceding plans, a circle with a radius of $\frac{1}{4}$ mile has been drawn, with its centre at the point of greatest pedestrian density. This circle indicates the desirable area within which the Library Site should be located, so as to be easily reached by as many people as possible. Within this circle, and on its perimeter, are at least 18 potentially available sites for the new Central Library.

A preliminary examination reduced the number of sites to be considered in detail to six, which are identified by the letters A to F. The plans and other relevant information for each of the six sites are indicated on the following pages; this information is then summarized and rated on a Site Analysis page. The resulting scores indicate the relative desirability of the six sites, after all factors have been considered.



SITE A



SITE A

Site

This site is located in Phase 2 of the commercial development of Jackson Square. The exact configuration and size of the site will require negotiation with the developer, but can be integrated with the pedestrian activity of the shopping concourse and plaza so as to become an asset both to the developer and to the Library.

Availability

Under the land assembly agreement, the site can be purchased by the municipality, once the exclusive rights of the developer have expired in mid-April 1974. The acquisition of the site is partly dependent upon the developer not being able to obtain a department store as a major tenant for Phase 2 of the development.

Development Potential and Restraints

Negotiation is required to determine the size and shape of the building, and its integration with the shopping concourse, but there is no reason why a successful solution can not be achieved. Provision for expansion might be limited.

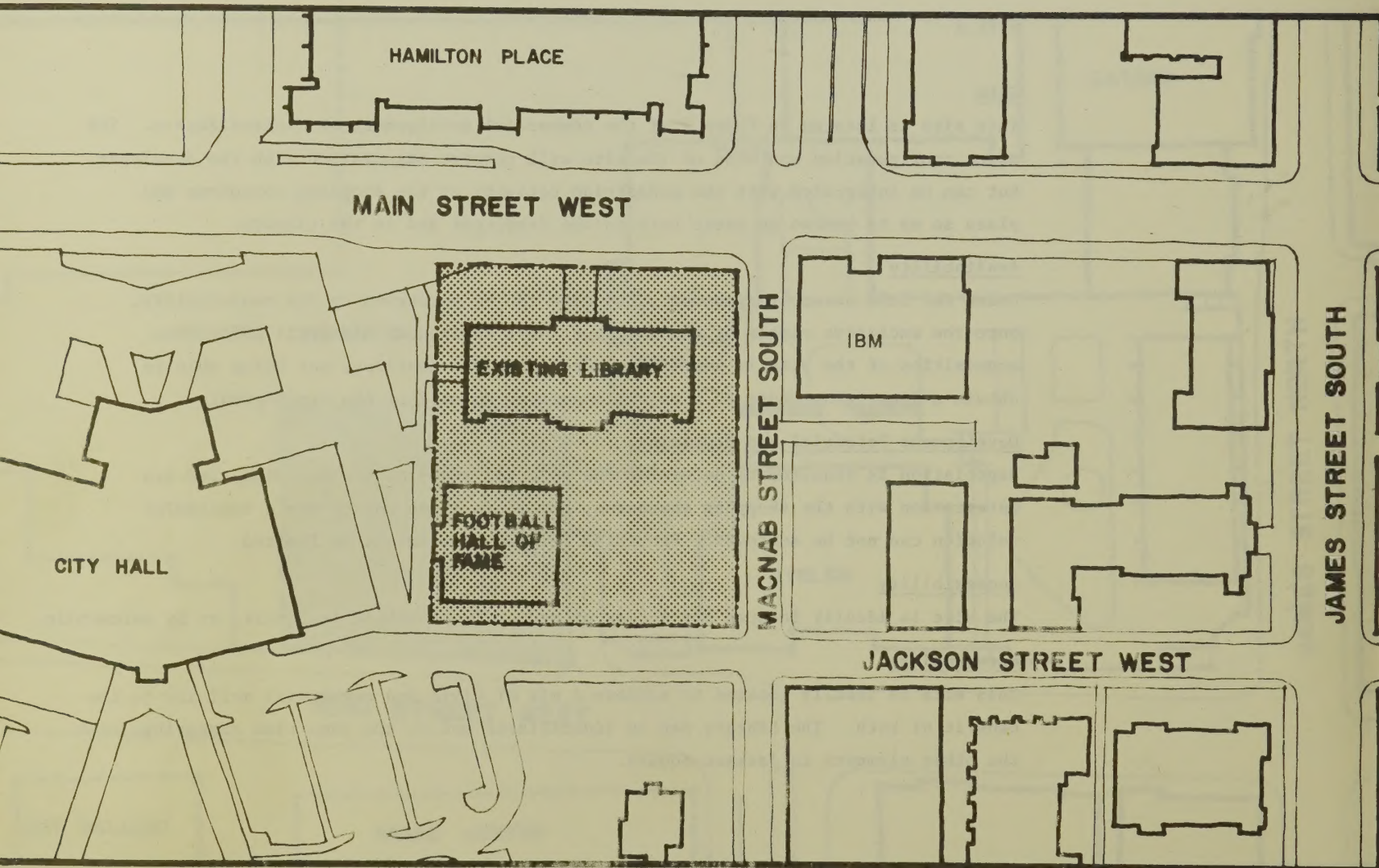
Accessibility

The site is ideally located for access by pedestrians, public transport, or by automobile.

Surroundings

This site is ideally located to achieve a mix of civic and commercial activity to the benefit of both. The Library can be identifiable and at the same time compatible with the other elements in Jackson Square.

SITE B



SITE B

Site

This is the site of the present main Library, the block bounded by Main, MacNab and Jackson Streets, with the City Hall on the west.

Availability

This site is publicly owned. Some public opposition may be expected to the demolition of the existing Library building and to the relocation of the Football Hall of Fame exhibits into the new Library structure.

Development Potential and Restraints

Development on this site is inhibited by the Football Hall of Fame, whose location leaves an L-shaped configuration which makes efficient planning of the new Library difficult. The loss of a 14 foot strip for road widening along the MacNab Street frontage further restricts the site, to the extent that the development of a functional library structure becomes impractical unless the entire site can be utilized. These factors combine to require the removal of the Football Hall of Fame building, and the provision of space to house its exhibits, designed for the purpose, within the new Library structure.

Extensive demolition work is required, as well as the provision of temporary accommodation for the circulating library and Hall of Fame during the construction period.

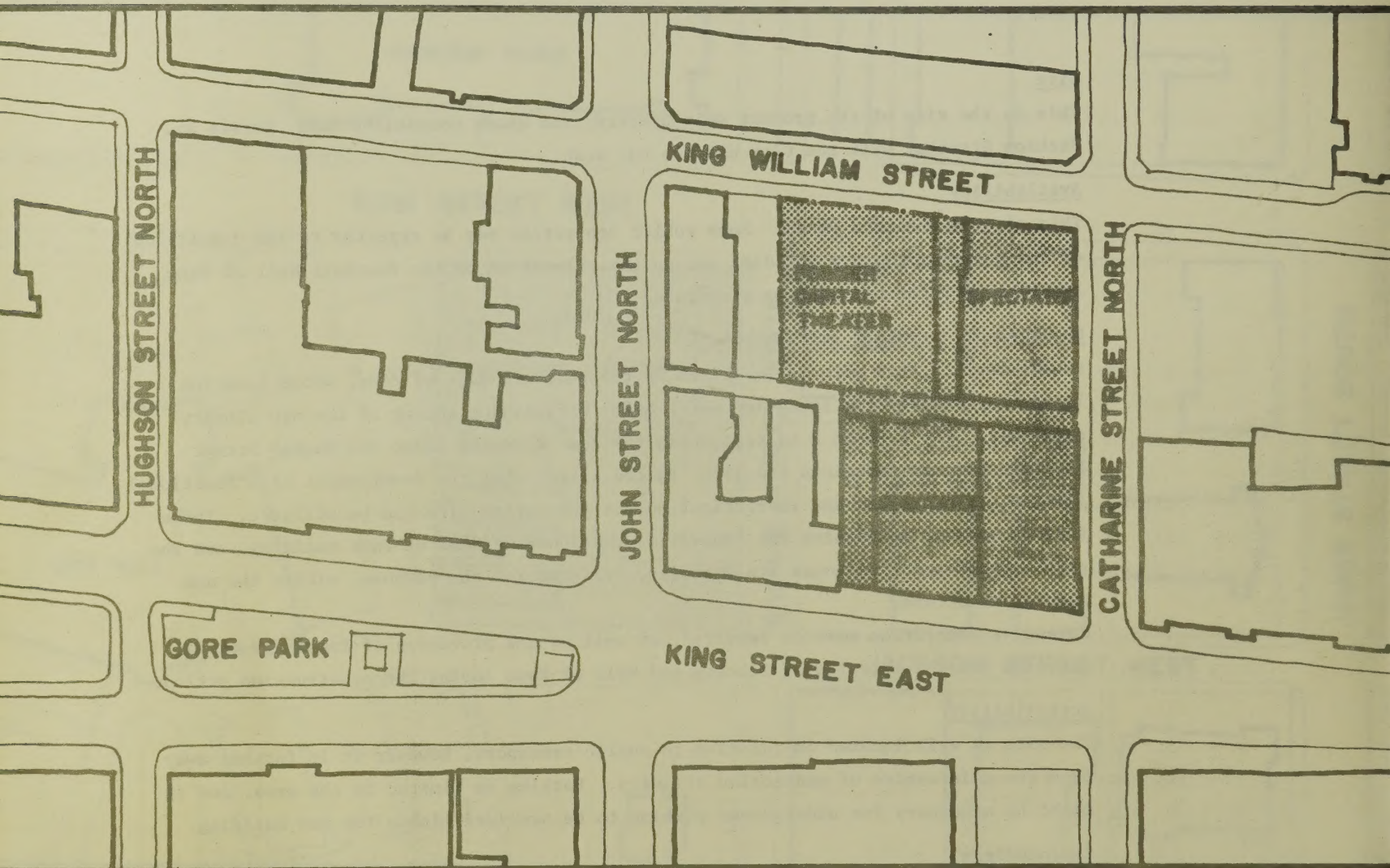
Accessibility

The site is well located in relation to public transport, however it is further away from the main centre of pedestrian activity. Parking is limited in the area, and it might be necessary for underground parking to be provided within the new building.

Surroundings

The site is excellent for identification of the Library and for environmental compatibility. It is close to civic and cultural facilities, but somewhat remote from commercial activity.

SITE C



SITE C

Site

The site of the former Capitol Theatre, the Spectator Buildings, and other properties in the block bounded by King William, Catharine and King Streets.

Availability

The property is privately owned and would be expensive to acquire. The timing of possible acquisition is dependent upon the relocation schedule of the Hamilton Spectator, which at the present time is uncertain.

Development Potential and Restraints

The site is large and provides ample room for expansion. Extensive demolition would be necessary to clear the property.

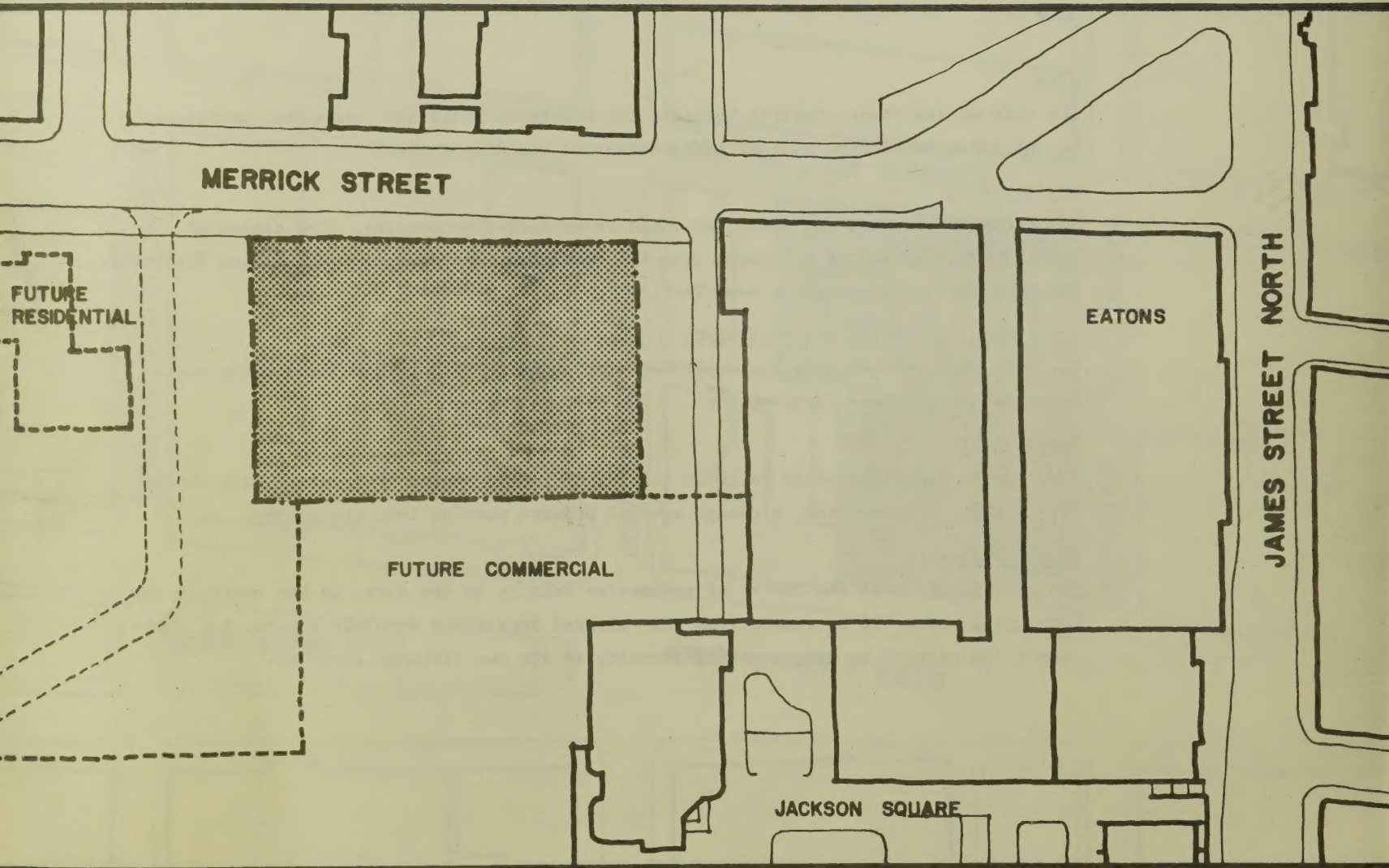
Accessibility

The site is well located in relation to pedestrian and public transport. Easy automobile access is restricted, although several private parking lots are nearby.

Surroundings

The site is close to the centre of pedestrian density in the City, in the heart of the commercial core. It is remote from the cultural facilities in Civic Square, but would permit the Library to have a strong identity in its own distinct location.

SITE D



SITE D

Site

The officially designated site for the Library, with the farmers' market below, on the north side of Jackson Square on Merrick Street.

Availability

This site is the last scheduled Phase in Jackson Square.

Development Potential and Restraints

The site is adequate in size for the Library building plus provision for expansion.

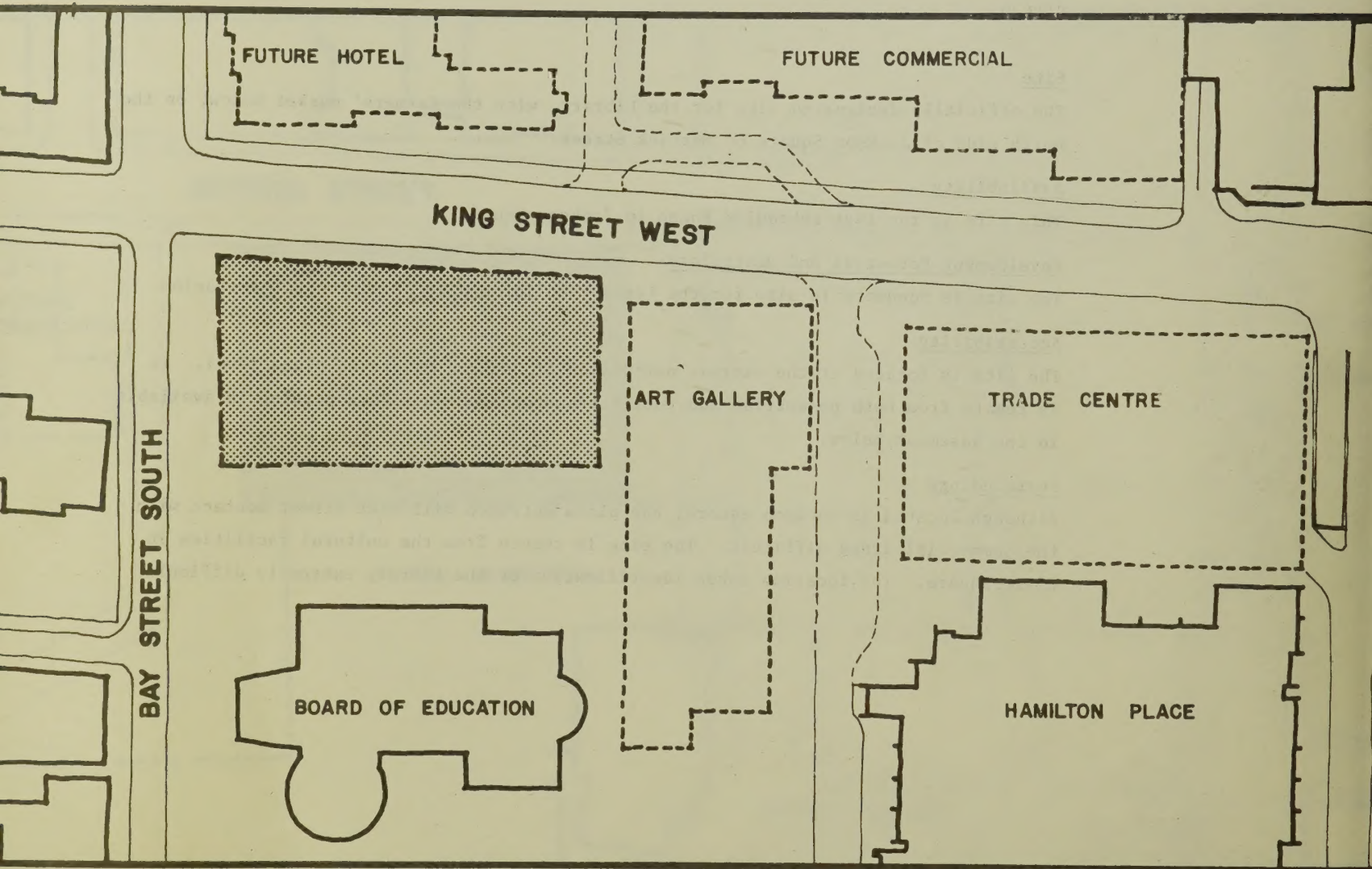
Accessibility

The site is located at the extreme north side of Jackson Square on plaza level. It is remote from both pedestrian and public transport access. Some parking is available in the basement below.

Surroundings

Although located in Jackson Square, the plaza entrance will make direct contact with the commercial areas difficult. The site is remote from the cultural facilities in Civic Square. The location makes identification of the Library extremely difficult.

SITE E



SITE E

Site

An area north of the Board of Education Headquarters at the corner of King and Bay Streets. The size of the site is subject to negotiations with the Board of Education.

Availability

The site is publicly owned, and the Board of Education has indicated a positive interest in the Library developing land, subject to further negotiations.

Development Potential and Restraints

If an adequate area can be negotiated, the site would be eminently suitable for construction of the new Central Library.

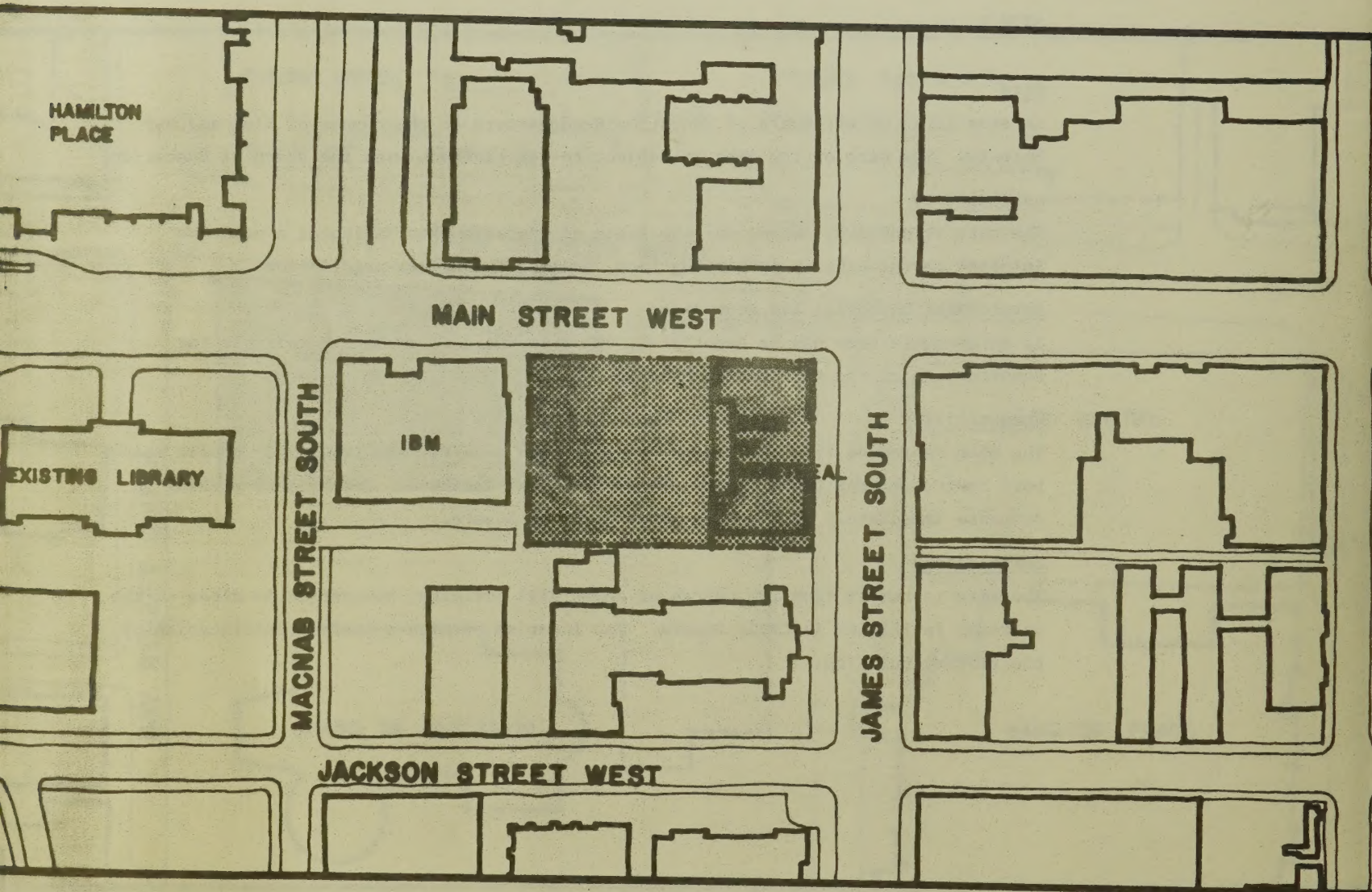
Accessibility

The site is remote from the centre of pedestrian density, and from major public transport routes, except those serving the west end of Hamilton. Underground parking is proposed immediately east of the site, in Civic Square.

Surroundings

The site is remote from the centre of commercial activity, however it is close to the cultural facilities in Civic Square. The location permits a ready identification of the Library building.

SITE F



22

0

300



SITE F

Site

The Bank of Montreal building at the corner of Main and James Streets, plus the area immediately west. This site is well located, however it is too small for the requirements of the new Central Library, even if the Bank of Montreal building were to be demolished. The Bank building has considerable historical value, and a large degree of public protest could be expected to its proposed demolition.

Site Analysis Table

The purpose of the Site Analysis Table is to evaluate the six prime sites, in order to arrive at a numerical rating indicating the relative desirability of each site. The rating is divided into four sections, each of which has a result expressed as a percentage. The percentage totals of the four sections are added and again reduced to a percentage, to give the final total score for each site. Values reflecting relative significance are assigned to each category. Each site has been rated from 0 to 3 for each category; the rating is multiplied by the value to give the score.

Section B - Availability

1 Ownership - A privately owned site may be more difficult to acquire, and therefore has a lower score. A publicly owned site, without any complications (such as negotiations) will rate a high score.

2 Cost - The higher the cost, the lower the score.

3 Rate Payers' Concern - Existing buildings, the demolition of which may arouse the concern of the citizens, cause a low score.

4 Timing - A site which may not be available for purchase or construction for a considerable period of time, has a low rating.

Section C - Development Potential and Restraints

1 Size and Shape - A site which is too small, or which may have unusual restrictions, has a low rating.

2 Expansion - The rating reflects the ease of provision for expansion.

3 Sub-Service Obstructions - Existing foundations or other obstructions cause a low rating.

4 Site Preparations - A clear site has a high rating; a site requiring demolition of existing buildings has a low rating.

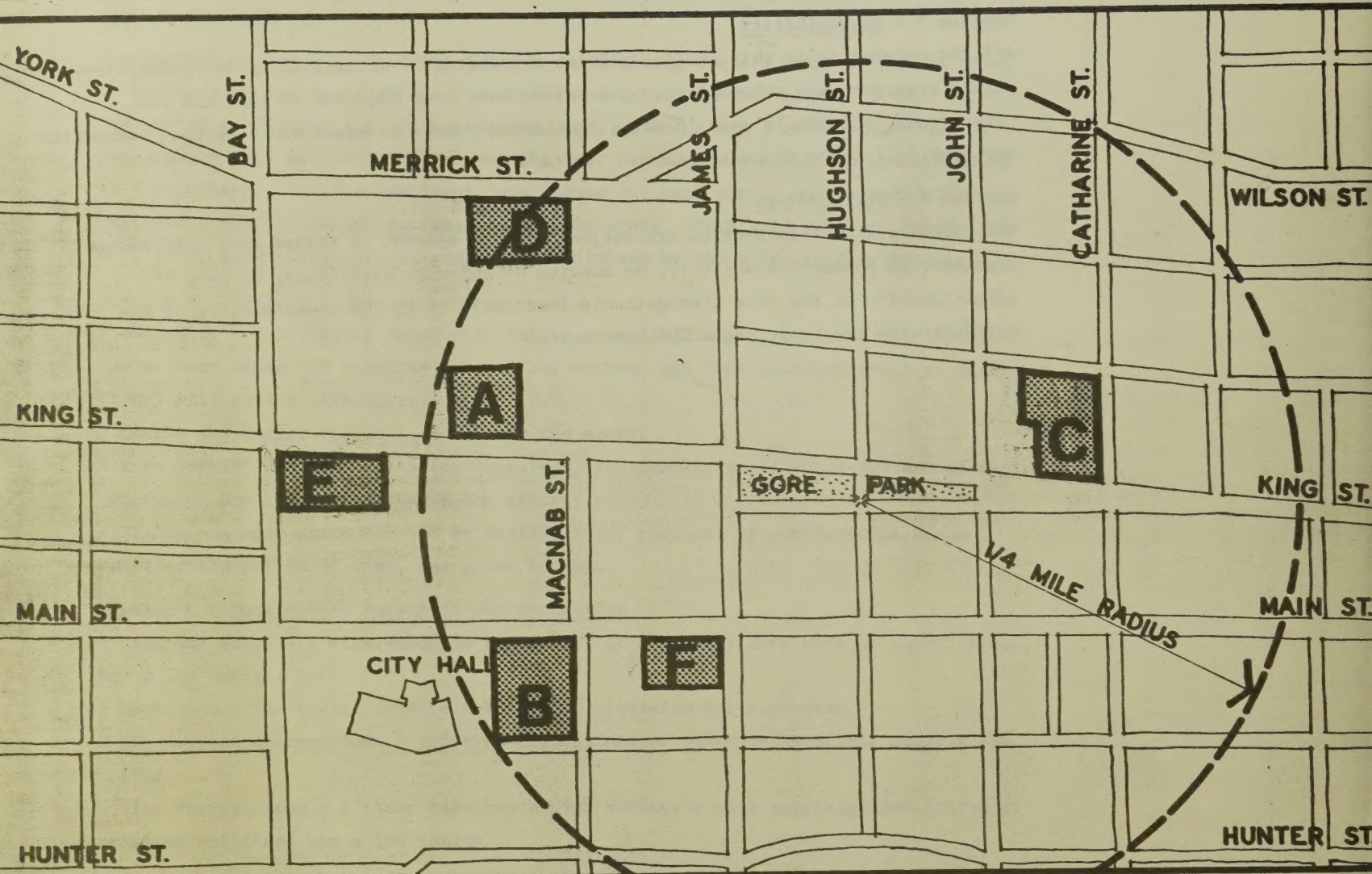
Section D - Accessibility

All the categories in this section reflect the degree of accessibility for pedestrians, public transport and automobiles. The values have been adjusted so that the two categories, 'automobile' and 'parking facilities', have an equal score to the 'pedestrian' and 'public transport' categories.

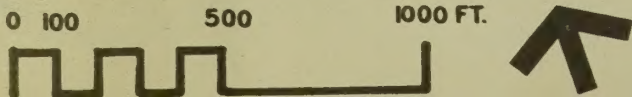
Section E - Surroundings

The categories in this section are subjective, and attempt to assess each site by its proximity to pedestrian activity, to service or cultural facilities, by ease of identification of the site (recognizable location), or by the compatibility of the building with its environment and vice versa.

LOCATION OF SITES



26 0 100 500 1000 FT.



SITE ANALYSIS

A B C D E F

A GENERAL SITE DATA

1	Area	*	65,600 sf.	60,000 sf.	57,800 sf.	44,000 sf.	31,850 sf.
2	Present Zoning	I	HI	I	I	I	HI
3	Maximum Floor Area Ratio	11X	8X	11X	11X	11X	8X
4	Maximum Ground Floor Area	*	59,450 sf.	56,600 sf.	57,800 sf.	39,500 sf.	28,300 sf.

VALUE	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score	Score
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B AVAILABILITY

1	Ownership	2	4	6	2	6	2	4
2	Cost	3	9	9	3	9	6	3
3	Rate Payers' Concern	2	6	0	6	6	6	0
4	Timing	1	3	3	1	3	3	3
	TOTAL		22	18	12	24	17	10
	%		92%	75%	50%	100%	71%	42%

C DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL & RESTRAINTS

1	Size and Shape	3	3	9	9	9	9	0
2	Expansion	2	2	4	6	4	4	0
3	Sub-Surface Obstructions	1	3	2	1	3	3	2
4	Site Preparations	3	9	0	0	9	9	3
	TOTAL		17	15	16	25	25	5
	%		63%	56%	59%	93%	93%	19%

D ACCESSIBILITY

1	Pedestrian	3	9	6	9	3	3	9
2	Public Transport	3	9	9	9	0	3	9
3	Automobile	1	3	3	2	3	3	2
4	Parking Facilities	2	6	4	4	6	6	2
	TOTAL		27	22	24	12	15	22
	%		100%	81%	89%	44%	55%	81%

E SURROUNDINGS

1	Contact Pedestrian Concentration	3	9	6	9	3	3	6
2	Contact Supporting Facilities	1	3	1	3	2	0	3
3	Contact Cultural Facilities	1	3	3	2	1	3	2
4	Recognizable Location	2	4	6	4	2	4	6
5	Environmental Compatibility	3	6	9	9	3	6	6
	TOTAL		25	25	27	11	16	23
	%		83%	83%	90%	37%	53%	77%

TOTAL SCORE

85% 74% 72% 69% 68% 54%

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Site Analysis gives the highest score to Site A, located in Jackson Square immediately west of the Stelco Tower. The existing Library site, (Site B) is second, closely followed by the Spectator Building site. The cost of acquisition and demolition on the Spectator site, combined with a probable unacceptable delay in the time of availability, rule out this location from further consideration.

Site A is part of the commercial section of Jackson Square, for which Yale Properties have exclusive rights of development until mid-April 1974. Yale Properties are currently negotiating to obtain a major department store as a tenant for this site, to act as a catalyst for the development of Phase 2 of the shopping concourse. The Central Library can also function as a catalyst to justify continuation of the shopping concourse, and is a realistic alternative, should Yale Properties be unsuccessful in obtaining a department store as tenant. The Central Library can be constructed by the Library Board to occupy a relatively small area at concourse level, providing an entrance for the library above, and a small circulating collection, both opening off the interior street of the shopping concourse. The main body of the Library would begin at plaza level above. By its planning and design the Central Library will be an asset to Jackson Square, and will in turn benefit from the life and vitality of the commercial shopping area. The legal technicalities regarding ownership or leasing of the site for the Central Library do not need to be discussed in detail at this time. Once the principle of this most desirable location is accepted, the technicalities can be resolved.

We recommend Site A, in Jackson Square immediately west of the Stelco Tower on the north side of King Street, as the site for the new Central Library. If this site is to be obtained, the Library Board must request the City of Hamilton to prepare to acquire the site before a further extension of the rights of Yale Properties may be proposed in mid-April.

HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



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